

But we lost everything. And don't prolong this disaster bill. Allow us to go on with our lives.

That is Kari and Paul Kolstoe from Grand Forks, ND.

There are so many letters.

Rodney and Judy Krause. I talked to Rodney and Judy a couple days ago, as a matter of fact. They are also from Grand Forks, ND.

April 19 [Rod writes] we were evacuated from our home, and it sat under water for a period of 10 to 12 days, with 56 inches of sewage and floodwater on the main floor. Currently, the house is sitting empty and we're waiting for a bill to be passed in Congress dealing with flood relief.

Rod Krause says:

I'm a staff sergeant in the Air Force, and my wife and myself also happen to be from Grand Forks. We're proud of this community, and we hate to see it as wasted as it is from this flood. Right now, as a member of the Air Force, even through all this mess, I have my bags packed and ready to go at a moment's notice to fight, possibly die, for this country, basically at your calling. But what Congress is doing now really hurts. I still need to make a house payment for a home that sits empty. And it keeps getting worse as the days pass. I can't do anything but wait. All we want is an answer. Why is this taking so long?

Arthur Bakken, who is a councilman in Grand Forks, says:

People here have no homes, no jobs, no other homes to go to. They have no toys, no bikes, no clothes, or anything else for their children.

Mr. President, I ask for 5 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. I mentioned yesterday a call from a man named Mark whose family has been separated, children living with the grandparents, his home damaged by the flood. His wife is in the hospital with a terminal illness, telling us that his wife has only a couple months to live perhaps, asking us to make the decisions that allow them to get on with their lives.

Here is another little drawing from a schoolchild who sent it to me. It probably says it is as well as any can. It is two different scenes. One is a scene of flooding and devastation and trees down; and it says, "If you do nothing." And the other side is a page with a scene with a park bench and grass and trees and sun and flowers; and underneath it says, "If you do something."

These are people who have voiced to say to us today, through my reading their letters, that they really need help. That is what this disaster legislation is about, reaching out and helping those who, through no fault of their own, have had to bear the burden of a natural disaster of enormous proportions.

I came to Congress some many years ago, and I have on behalf of the constituents in North Dakota on every occasion—on every single occasion—said, when there was an earthquake in California, "Count me in, and count my constituents in, because on behalf of North Dakotans I want so vote yes to provide disaster aid for you."

For flood victims on the Mississippi, I have said, yes, because I think it is important to provide disaster aid for you.

In every circumstance, every day and every way that we have been requested to provide disaster assistance, I have indicated that I felt North Dakotans would want to do that.

North Dakotans now feel that people in the rest of this country will want to do that for us as well—North Dakotans, Minnesotans and South Dakotans—who have suffered through the disaster.

Isn't every disaster unique and isn't every disaster difficult and traumatic? Yes, it is. There is no question about that. We have seen now through the new technology of television in the modern age the gripping scenes of devastation from disasters—death, and destruction. It breaks your heart to see that anywhere in our country.

This disaster was unusual in a couple of respects. First, we were enormously fortunate that we did not suffer a major or massive loss of life. Some lost their lives, but we did not suffer the loss of life of hundreds of citizens.

This combination of blizzards and floods and then fires in the middle of the flood that ripped the guts from a significant city in our State, this combination is a very unusual circumstance because a large city was completely abandoned and evacuated and completely inundated with water. The water came and stayed for a very long period of time.

Now we have hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of homes that will never again be lived in. We have families from every single one of those homes whose possessions are now out on the berm, somewhere out on the boulevard, on the driveway being hauled away in dump trucks—the dolls, the baby carriages, the pictures, all of the belongings of those families. They do not know what will come next for them, what their lives will be like, where they will live, how they will make a house payment on a house that is destroyed. That is why this legislation is so critically important.

Now, I have been very upset that we have not gotten this done. We are about 3 weeks late. I have said repeatedly that I appreciate enormously the cooperation on a bipartisan basis to put a disaster package in this bill that is very substantial and will be enormously helpful to these victims of this disaster. Most every Member of this institution deserves credit for what is in this bill, and I thank them for it.

I am upset that it was delayed. But if today this gets dislodged, and if today this bill gets passed by the House and the Senate and goes to the President for his signature, then we will finally be able to provide the answers that are necessary for these people to understand what the rest of their lives will be like, what will happen to their home, will their job be restored, will their community be rebuilt, will their region recover? Those are the questions

that will be answered by the hundreds of millions of dollars in the many categories in this piece of legislation. In fact, the disaster portion is something over \$5 billion in this legislation dealing with many, many States.

If and when this happens, and I hope it does today, it will be an enormous benefit to our region, and I will be forever grateful to the Members of the Senate who made it happen.

Mr. President, as I finish, I say to my colleagues, while I have worn out my welcome in recent weeks on this subject, I do not apologize for it. I speak on behalf of people who need a voice in this debate. Let us hope, at the end of this day, we will have some wonderful news for people who have been victims of this disaster.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will stand in recess until the hour of 3 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:47 p.m., recessed until 2:58 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. ROBERTS].

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

RECESS

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess until the hour of 3:30 p.m.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:58 and 26 seconds p.m., recessed until 3:30 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. ROBERTS].

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT AGREEMENTS

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I am prepared to ask for some unanimous-consent agreements here momentarily. I believe that the Democratic leader will be here. In the meantime, I thought I might just give the Senators some idea of what the time could be for the balance of the afternoon and then some thought about next week.

If we get the agreement we have here before us entered into and agreed to, we would begin debate, I believe, then at about quarter until 4 on the supplemental appropriations, with a vote occurring 1 hour from then. So that vote could occur around quarter of 5. We are looking at the possibility of, of course, getting agreement for committees to keep working, because we have a number of committees that are in very crucial markups—the Armed Services Committee, the Foreign Relations Committee, and the Finance Committee is meeting in a walk-through, although it is not a markup.